

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 134

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Wheeler “Jay” Nidiffer for meritorious service to the citizens of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those coaches and administrators who, through their extraordinary efforts and enthusiasm, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy coach and administrator is Jay Nidiffer, Athletic Director for Lincoln Memorial University; and

WHEREAS, the son of Andy J. and Josephine Nave Nidiffer and a graduate of Unaka High School, Jay Nidiffer was an impressive athlete in his own right as a youth and thus earned a baseball scholarship to Lincoln Memorial University, from which he received his Bachelor of Science degree; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nidiffer saw fit to further his own academic, professional, and athletic development by earning a graduate degree from East Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, not only an exemplary athlete for his university, Jay also served two years as a noble soldier for his country during the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, a devoted supporter of youth, Jay Nidiffer began his coaching and teaching career at Johnson County High School in Mountain City, Tennessee; he has also coached and inspired young people at schools in Hot Springs, Virginia; Pilot Mountain, North Carolina; and Clinton, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Coach Nidiffer has also shared his motivational influence with college students, serving as a coach for teams at universities such as Mercer, Georgia Tech, Auburn, East Tennessee State, Walters, and his alma mater, where he currently serves as Athletic Director; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his work with Lincoln Memorial University, Coach Nidiffer finds time to lend his talents to such notable civic organizations as the Carter County Republican Party, which he has served as Chairman for four years; and

WHEREAS, Jay Nidiffer is not only a mentor in the realms of academia, athletics, family, and community, but also a spiritual leader, being an active member of First Baptist Church in Elizabethton; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nidiffer has stood up for his principles even when they were unpopular; in 1962, he coached the first African-American student athlete on the high school level in the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, when other schools refused to play his team because of the one African-American player, Jay Nidiffer let it be known that his entire team would travel together, or the entire team would stay home; that year, the team traveled throughout east Tennessee and even progressed to the regional tournament at the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, while always maintaining the highest academic, athletic, and personal standards, Mr. Nidiffer is known for being able to give individualized attention to his students; he truly has always lived by his belief that athletics is never more important than the student; and

WHEREAS, those who know him best say Mr. Nidiffer is not one to sit by and let others carry the load; he is a true leader who inspires greatness in everyone he meets; and

WHEREAS, Jay Nidiffer epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, despite the rich abundance of successes in both his life and work, Mr. Nidiffer humbly attributes his achievements to his parents, family, teachers, coaches, and to his devout belief in God; he is known to assert his faith that "through Him all things are possible"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Nidiffer is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife Katie Hodge Nidiffer; their son Toby Nidiffer and his wife Carol; and their two grandchildren Andrew and Kerri; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Jay Nidiffer for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Wheeler “Jay” Nidiffer for his meritorious service to the state of Tennessee, especially its young students and athletes, and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.